

1993

# American-Israeli relations during the Nixon Administration, 1969-1974

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31979/etd.v6bm-mcpr>  
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**Order Number 1353011**

**American-Israeli relations during the Nixon administration:  
1969-1974**

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**San Jose State University, 1993**

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300 N. Zeeb Rd.  
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AMERICAN-ISRAELI RELATIONS DURING THE  
NIXON ADMINISTRATION: 1969-1974

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of History

San Jose State University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

by

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May, 1993

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## ABSTRACT

### AMERICAN-ISRAELI RELATIONS DURING THE NIXON ADMINISTRATION: 1969-1974

by Aneta M. Dorhout

During the Nixon administration, important changes occurred in American-Israeli relations that would affect foreign policy to this day. This thesis examines the national policy decisions toward Israel and peace proposals for the Middle East that were pursued by the Nixon administration between 1969-1974. During this time, Israel performed an important role as an American proxy against any Soviet-inspired threats in the region. Foreign aid to Israel was not justified on the basis of an historical or moral obligation, but rather on a strategic basis.

The United States government committed an unprecedented amount of military aid to ensure Israeli security and survival. President Richard Nixon and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger effectively used foreign aid as a leverage tool to bring Israel to the bargaining table during attempts at peace negotiations, however, the results of the Nixon/Kissinger era were mixed. Although Israel served American interests during the Nixon administration, Israeli dependence on American aid only hurt the peace process by increasing tension in the region.



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## INTRODUCTION

Over the years, the United States and Israel have developed a special relationship. Essential to this relationship is the promise policymakers in Washington have made to the "survival, security, and well-being of Israel" as an independent state in the Middle East.<sup>1</sup> In return, Israel has provided the United States with a stabilizing force for the region, thereby acting as a deterrent to Soviet advances and the potential for a global confrontation. From 1948-1967, Americans attempted to preserve this stability by providing Israel with military aid for defensive purposes only. This relationship changed, however, after the 1967 Six Day War. After Israel's decisive victory over its Arab neighbors, Washington saw a wider role for Israel in the region which required substantial increases in military and economic aid. Not surprisingly, American aid to Israel was matched by Soviet aid to the Arab countries in the area. The largest recipient was Egypt, but Syria and Iraq also benefitted especially after the 1967 war in a continuing spiral of escalating arms sales.

During President Nixon's administration, 1969-1974, important changes occurred in American-Israeli relations that would affect foreign policy to this day. No longer was aid given to Israel justified based on an historical or moral obligation. Israel had become a strategic asset to the United States and was now of vital interest to America. Israel could serve as an American proxy against a Soviet-inspired threat in the region. In addition, a strong Israel could help deter a global confrontation sparked by an Arab-Israeli war. Furthermore, a strong Israeli military would be sufficient to fight an Arab foe without the need of involving American troops in another war abroad. As America played a larger role in the region by both

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<sup>1</sup> Bernard Reich, The United States and Israel: Influence in the Special Relationship (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1984), 4.

supporting Israel and promoting the peace process, there evolved a corresponding decrease in Soviet influence in the region, thereby demonstrating Soviet ineffectiveness in achieving Arab goals. By 1973, the Nixon-Kissinger team had persuaded moderate Arabs (Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia) that the United States could support their interests better than the Soviets. Meanwhile, the prospects of keeping the oil supply cheap and continuous, and avoiding an embargo were always in the forefront of policy decisions.

Historically, the United States had not always been the arms supplier of Israel. Even though President Harry S. Truman was the first to recognize Israel eleven minutes after the country proclaimed its statehood on May 14, 1948, the military ties between the United States and Israel began with an arms embargo sanctioned by the United Nations Security Council.<sup>2</sup> The arms embargo against the region began in December of 1947 and hurt Israel greatly in its war for independence because the Arabs could rely on Britain for their arms supply.<sup>3</sup> During the Truman years, Israel asked to purchase weapons and military equipment from the United States government every year, but all requests were denied.<sup>4</sup> Although the United States did not support Israel militarily, Israel's security was promoted through the United Nations.

During the Eisenhower administration, American foreign policy centered on containing communism throughout the world. Eisenhower wanted American policy to remain neutral toward Israel; therefore the "no arms to Israel" policy continued under Secretary of State John Foster Dulles. In accordance with this policy, the Israeli Defense Ministry was limited in the 1950s to the purchase of non-military equipment from the United States.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Z'ev Schiff, "The United States and Israel: Friendship Under Strain," National Interest 10 (Winter 1987): 4.

<sup>3</sup> Reich, Influence in the Special Relationship, 5.

<sup>4</sup> Schiff, "Friendship Under Strain," 5.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

The Suez Crisis in 1956 put American-Israeli relations to the test. In 1956, President Gamal Abdel Nasser nationalized the Suez canal outraging Israel.<sup>6</sup> Then, Nasser negotiated an arms deal with Czechoslovakia, the Soviet proxy, once again threatening Israel's security. On October 29, Israel, Britain and France went to war against Egypt. Abba Eban, Israeli Ambassador, announced that Israel's intentions were "purely defensive" in light of the attacks by Egyptian fedayeen gangs along the canal.<sup>7</sup> Israeli Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion announced his willingness to withdraw from the recently recaptured Sinai only if Egypt renounced its state of war with Israel, abandoned its policy of "boycott and blockade," and ceased the incursions into Israeli territory of "murder gangs."<sup>8</sup>

Eisenhower stood tough and insisted on a withdrawal. Israeli actions received the criticism of the United Nations.<sup>9</sup> Eventually, the United States forced a cease-fire through United Nations action and insisted that all parties withdraw. Israel withdrew from all territory except for Sharm-el-Sheikh and Gaza. The last Israeli soldiers left the Sinai Peninsula on March 16, 1957. Eisenhower had "ushered in a new era" in which the United States and the Soviet Union would become responsible for resolving disputes between the Arabs and Israelis.<sup>10</sup>

During the Kennedy years, the president pledged his support of United Nations' resolutions concerning the Palestinian situation and reassured Israel with his optimistic outlook for a just peace in the region.<sup>11</sup> The United States did not want to become Israel's main arms supplier. President Lyndon B. Johnson agreed to sell Israel fifty Skyhawk A-4 airplanes (although they reached Israel only after

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<sup>6</sup> Gideon Raphael, Destination Peace: Three Decades of Israeli Foreign Policy, A Personal Memoir (New York: Stein and Day, 1981), 45.

<sup>7</sup> New York Times, 30 October 1956, 12.

<sup>8</sup> New York Times, 8 November 1956, 4.

<sup>9</sup> Raphael, Destination Peace, 61.

<sup>10</sup> Reich, Influence in the Special Relationship, 7.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 9.

the June 1967 War.)<sup>12</sup> Instead of simply supplying defensive weapons, Johnson began supplying offensive weapons such as large amounts of tanks and fighter bombers. America became the sole source of Israeli arms, and the most important contributor of economic aid and financial aid from private and public sources.<sup>13</sup>

Early in May, Syria helped spark a crisis by declaring that Israel "planned an invasion to upset its socialist government."<sup>14</sup> On May 16, 1967, Egypt was placed on "war footing" because of border tensions between Israel and Syria.<sup>15</sup> U Thant, United Nations Secretary General, agreed to Nasser's request and by May 19, all of the United Nations emergency forces had pulled out.<sup>16</sup> Then on May 22, Nasser ordered the total mobilization of Egypt's 100,000 man army reserve.<sup>17</sup> He also announced that he would close off the Gulf of Aqaba to Israel and ships carrying "strategic material" to Israel. To the Israelis, this was a deliberate challenge to war since the Western democracies, including the United States, Britain, Canada, and France, had guaranteed Israel's navigation rights through the Gulf of Aqaba.<sup>18</sup> President Lyndon B. Johnson responded by calling the blockade "illegal" and an emergency session of the United Nations Security Council was called with no result. By June 1, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Algeria, and Iraq joined forces with Nasser's Egypt "as a first step toward the liberation of Palestine and the regaining of the usurped land."<sup>19</sup> Golda Meir understood that this time it was a fight for the very survival of Israel.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Schiff, "Friendship Under Strain," 4.

<sup>13</sup> George W. Ball, "The Coming Crisis in Israeli-American Relations," Foreign Affairs 58 (February 1979-80): 235.

<sup>14</sup> Washington Post, 1 June 1967, 1.

<sup>15</sup> New York Times, 16 May 1967, 1.

<sup>16</sup> Golda Meir, My Life (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1975), 296.

<sup>17</sup> New York Times, 22 May 1967, 1.

<sup>18</sup> Meir, My Life, 297.

<sup>19</sup> Washington Post, 1 June 1967, 1.

<sup>20</sup> Meir, My Life, 304.

War broke out on June 5 when Israeli planes flew over Egyptian airfields and destroyed the aircraft that Israel claimed were poised to attack them. The Israeli airforce destroyed 400 Arab planes, including those on Syrian and Jordanian airfields. In addition to domination by air, Israeli ground forces had pushed their way deep into the Sinai and were well on their way to the Suez Canal.<sup>21</sup>

Then Jordan's King Hussein joined forces with Egypt and started shelling Jerusalem and Jewish settlements on the Jordan-Israeli border. It took only two days for Israel to occupy the West Bank and seize East Jerusalem.<sup>22</sup> Jerusalem had been divided since 1948 when Jordanian forces captured eastern Jerusalem. Israel claimed the Gaza Strip and the Sinai also, although few people lived there. By June 10, Israel defeated the Syrians and took the Golan Heights. The West Bank and Gaza contained 1,200,000 Palestinians, which only served to create an environment for continuing tension.<sup>23</sup>

The June War of 1967 prompted President Johnson to seek a peace settlement in the region, instead of merely hoping for stability. The Johnson administration subsequently pledged its strong support for Israel. By June 6, the United States supported a cease-fire which was achieved on all fronts by June 10.<sup>24</sup>

In the aftermath of the June War, the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 242 on November 22, 1967. The resolution required:

...the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East, which should include the application of both the following principles:

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<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 307.

<sup>22</sup> Washington Post, 6 June 1967, 1.

<sup>23</sup> New York Times, 20 September 1970, 8.

<sup>24</sup> William B. Quandt, Decade of Decisions: American Policy Toward the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1967-1976 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), 58-60.

- 1) withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict;
- 2) Termination of all claims or states of belligerency and respect for and acknowledgment of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every state in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force.<sup>25</sup>

Instead of establishing a peaceful coexistence between Israelis and Arabs, these two points of Resolution 242 would prove to be the stumbling blocks to peace.

Between 1969 and 1974, President Nixon pursued a policy of ensuring Israeli security while pressing for peace in the region. To this end, Israel received a huge influx of aid during this period because of its strategic importance to the United States. Correspondingly, Washington took the initiative in responding to regional conflicts in the Middle East because of the possibility of global implications. The threat of an American-Soviet nuclear confrontation weighed heavily on policymakers. To the dismay of some Israeli leaders, regional disputes with Arab neighbors were resolved by leaders in Washington and Moscow. Domestic concerns of Israel and the Arab countries were overshadowed by superpower politics.

To this end, American military assistance in the form of grants and credits to Israel increased from \$105 million in 1967 to \$238 million in 1973. But more significantly, military assistance in the form of military sales, including delivery of equipment, supplies and services, purchased for cash or United States government-financed credit, increased from \$194.9 million in 1967 to \$984.7 million in

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<sup>25</sup> Richard Stebbins and Elaine Adam, eds., Documents on American Foreign Relations, 1967 (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1968), 169.

1974.<sup>26</sup> Clearly, the United States government had committed to substantial military aid to secure Israeli security and survival. Israel had an important role to play in East-West relations. During the Nixon administration, Israel served American interests; yet Israeli dependence on American aid had only hurt the peace process by increasing tension in the region.

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<sup>26</sup> United States Bureau of the Census, Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1975 (Washington D.C., 1975), 810.



## CHAPTER 1

### NIXON TAKES OFFICE: 1969

Immediately upon entering office, President Nixon wanted a review of foreign policy. He thought the situation in the Middle East was becoming increasingly explosive. On January 27, 1969, Nixon held a press conference in which he stated:

I believe we need new initiatives and new leadership on the part of the United States in order to cool off the situation in the Mideast. I consider it a powder keg, very explosive. It needs to be diffused.<sup>27</sup>

In a press conference one week later, Nixon reported on his trip to Europe. He announced a five-prong approach to the Mideast situation. The approach included full American support of the Jarring mission; bilateral talks with the United States and Soviet Union prior to the talks between the four powers (Britain, France, United States and Soviet Union); four power talks at the United Nations; talks with Israel and its neighbors; and also the pursuit of long-range goals, such as the Eisenhower-Strauss plan which proposed the development of nuclear energy for desalination and irrigation projects.<sup>28</sup>

The diplomatic overtures up to this point had centered on the Jarring Mission. Article III and IV of United Nations Resolution 242 provided for a special representative to negotiate a peace settlement. Ambassador Gunnar Jarring of Sweden took the assignment and established the headquarters of the United Nations Middle East mission in Cyprus. He sought to mediate the Middle East dispute between Israel and the moderate Arab states such as Egypt and

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<sup>27</sup> George W. Johnson, ed., The Nixon Presidential Press Conferences (New York: Earl M. Coleman Enterprises, Inc., 1978), 3.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 12.

Jordan. Lebanon was also involved but to a lesser degree. Syria stayed out of the peace process because it did not accept Resolution 242 or the Jarring mission. In his mind, he was "not a trouble shooter;" rather he tried to find "areas of agreement" and help find ways to carry out this agreement.<sup>29</sup>

The first phase of the Jarring Mission lasted from December of 1967 to December of 1968. Each side presented two strongly opposing viewpoints. Israel asserted that there would be no withdrawal from the occupied territories until a peace treaty was settled through direct negotiations. To this end, the Israelis presented several proposals for peace. On the Arab side, Egypt and Jordan maintained the view that these issues could not be discussed until Israel had withdrawn forces and returned to 1967 border lines. Unfortunately, neither side was willing to compromise.<sup>30</sup>

The second phase, characterized by a brief period of shuttle diplomacy between November 1968-June 1970, found Jarring submitting a series of questions to each side regarding that country's attitude toward Resolution 242. He was hoping to find a point of departure for discussions, but the positions of each side remained intransigent.<sup>31</sup>

On March 4, 1969, on a televised press conference, Nixon pledged his support once again for bilateral consultations between the United States and the Soviet Union, and support for four power talks. He hoped the talks would bring the Arabs and Israelis to the bargaining table; yet all foreign policy issues now had to be viewed in light of superpower relationship:

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<sup>29</sup> New York Times, 13 December 1968, 17.

<sup>30</sup> Ishaq Ghanayem and Alden Voth, The Kissinger Legacy: American-Middle East Policy (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1984), 69.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 70.

I think it is that overwhelming fact--the fact that if the situation in the Middle East and Vietnam is allowed to escalate, it is the fact that it might lead to a confrontation--that is giving the Soviet Union second thoughts.<sup>32</sup>

Secretary of State William Rogers reiterated the administration's policy toward Israel on March 27, 1969. Even though the big power talks had achieved little success, Rogers announced that America would once again "approve in principle four-power discussions in support of Ambassador Jarring..." Since there had been no progress in the Middle East peace process, Rogers asserted that the United States had a responsibility to take an "active role" in supporting the United Nations mission. The goals of the United States as outlined by Secretary of State Rogers:

would require withdrawal of occupied areas, acknowledgment of every state, withdrawal as a prerequisite for establishment of secure and recognized boundaries, guarantee of free navigation of the Straits of Tiran and the Suez Canal, a just settlement of the refugee issue. He [Nixon] did not believe in an imposed peace, but hoped Ambassador Jarring could bring an agreement between the two parties.<sup>33</sup>

Unfortunately, Jarring's efforts proved fruitless. Therefore, on April 5, 1969, Jarring returned to Moscow to resume his duties as Sweden's ambassador to the Soviet Union. Nixon and Kissinger were becoming worried about the deteriorating situation caused by the continuing war of attrition between Israel and Egypt since 1969.

As the Americans tried to bring together Israeli and Arab leaders, a war of attrition continued in the Middle East. Nasser initiated his self-proclaimed war of attrition during the spring of 1969 which lasted until the summer of 1970, but random violence

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<sup>32</sup> Johnson, ed., The Nixon Presidential Press Conferences, 30.

<sup>33</sup> Congress, Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, Briefing by Secretary of State William P. Rogers (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1969), 50.

had persisted since the end of the Six-Day War in 1967. The cycle of violence escalated between July and October of 1967 when Israeli destroyers and motor torpedo boats battled their Egyptian counterparts along the Mediterranean coast. In July, the Israeli destroyer Eilat sank two Egyptian patrol boats off the Sinai coast. Then on October 21, 1967, the Eilat was sunk by three SS-N-2 Styx surface-to-air missiles killing forty-seven Israeli sailors. It was the first use of missiles in the Arab-Israeli conflict.<sup>34</sup> Nevertheless, the main fighting during 1967-1969 was along the Suez Canal and along the borders between Israel and its Arab neighbors.<sup>35</sup> In fact, from the end of the Six-Day War until the end of 1968, Israeli sources reported 1288 incidents of terrorism:

920 incidents on the Jordanian front, 166 on the Egyptian border, 37 on the cease-fire line with Syria, 35 on the Lebanese border, and 130 in Gaza. Israeli losses...281 dead and 1005 wounded, of which about 25% were civilians.<sup>36</sup>

A war of attrition was Nasser's way of upping the ante in on-going violence. Nasser hoped to wear down the Israelis on the eastern bank of the Suez canal. His offensive was hurting the Israelis; two or three soldiers were killed daily. As expected, the Israelis retaliated and by the summer of 1969 were using air power not only along the canal, but also penetrating well into Egypt. Even with Soviet support, the Egyptian air force was powerless in the face of Israel.<sup>37</sup>

Perhaps the most controversial of the attacks that occurred during the war of attrition was the East Ghor Canal raids. On September 3, 1969, the American Assistant Secretary of Near Eastern affairs, Joseph Sisco, learned that the Israeli Air Force had destroyed

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<sup>34</sup> Stephen Green, Living By The Sword: America and Israel in the Middle East, 1968-1987 (Brattleboro, Vermont: Amana Books, 1988), 35.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 60.

<sup>36</sup> Henry Kissinger, The White House Years (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1982), 349.

<sup>37</sup> Tad Szulc, The Illusion of Peace: Foreign Policy in the Nixon Years (New York: The Viking Press, 1978), 207.

a section of the East Ghor Canal in Jordan. Israel argued that these raids were simply in response to Palestinian border crossings and violence. The canal was built in part with financial assistance from the United States and became an important part of Jordan's development. The canal enabled farmers in the Jordan River Valley to grow banana and citrus trees and other crops. In fact, the valley's production rose from \$1.2 million in 1959-60 to \$9.5 million in 1965-66. By 1969, the valley provided eighteen per cent of Jordan's national farm output.<sup>38</sup>

Because of the increasing danger of attack, officials from the United States Agency for International Development had stopped working on repairs, and workers from the Jordanian government also had to back away from repair work because of sniper fire. Why were the Israelis attacking a American-financed canal with American-supplied planes and weapons? The Israelis had three reasons for their animosity toward the canal. It provided the Jordanians with the ability to harvest crops earlier than the Israelis and command higher prices, it diverted water away from the Yarmuk, which flowed into Israel; and it provided sustenance for Palestinians who had fled Israel during the 1967 war. <sup>39</sup>

What started as border skirmishes by isolated "terrorists" after the war, developed into an Israeli attack of the Palestinian Liberation Organization headquarters at Karameh. Even though the United States discouraged the attack, the Israeli air force struck Karameh after an Israeli school bus hit a landmine planted by a faction of the Palestinian Liberation Organization, Fateh, on March 18. Most farmers fled the East Ghor Canal area. Those that remained would be attacked by Israeli air strikes. In August and December of 1968, then again in January-March of 1969 Israeli planes moved their attacks to the interior of Jordan. Then on April 11, 1969, the main

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<sup>38</sup> New York Times, 24 August 1969, 11.

<sup>39</sup> Green, Living By The Sword, 21.

canal was attacked and completely cut off. "Quite simply, Israel was at war with a canal."<sup>40</sup>

The New York Times reported the canal bombings on August 24, 1969. The article emphasized the Jordanian will to farm even in the face of Israeli bombings. The article said any canal damage was not intentional:

Although the valley farmers admit that the Israelis do not generally fire indiscriminately on farms and agricultural or irrigation projects...but if a farm or a canal happens to be in the line of fire between Israeli batteries and what they believe are guerrilla targets, a salvo of shells is likely to destroy the work of months or years.<sup>41</sup>

The point of this article was not to criticize Israeli bombings, but to point out the fortitude and courage of Jordanians who farmed instead of fleeing. In fact, by the time the article was written much of the canal lay in ruins.

Stephen Green has argued in his book, Living by the Sword, that Israeli air raids on Jordan were not simply a retaliatory act in response to Palestinian terrorist attacks. He was disappointed that the New York Times did not question the fact that Israel had bombed American-made canals with American A-4 aircraft. Green suggested that the Palestinian crossings gave Israel an excuse to bomb the East Ghor Canal.<sup>42</sup>

Former Deputy Foreign Minister Gideon Raphael reported that Washington "watched with equanimity" as Israeli bombing raids approached Cairo. Apparently when Israeli Ambassador Yitzhak Rabin consulted privately with Assistant Secretary of State, Joseph Sisco, and announced that the Israeli army might march right into Cairo, Sisco "did not fall from his chair."<sup>43</sup> Rabin has admitted that in

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 27-29.

<sup>41</sup> New York Times, 24 August 1969, 11.

<sup>42</sup> Green, Living By The Sword, 28.

<sup>43</sup> Raphael, Destination Peace, 205.

Israel he was regarded as a "hawk" who was "on the brink" of losing his mind for advocating the deep-penetration raids. Rabin maintained that January 7, 1970 marked the turning point in the war of attrition. The Israeli air strikes into Egyptian territory would rid the United States of the feeling that they were supporting the loser in the Middle East.<sup>44</sup>

This could have been a prime opportunity to pursue a framework for peace. The Syrian front had remained relatively quiet since the 1967 cease-fire. Egypt was on the defensive after the Israeli air attacks, and most of the Palestinian refugees in the East Ghor Valley had fled the border areas, decreasing the possibility of skirmishes. Yet instead of pursuing peace, the Israelis began a campaign of deep penetration air raids which lasted between January and April of 1970. Israel flew over 3300 sorties and dropped over 8,000 tons of bombs on Egypt. Civilian factories were bombed as well as an elementary school. The chance for peace was lost.<sup>45</sup>

American support for the Israeli bombing did not discredit Nasser and lessen Soviet influence in the region as Nixon intended. Instead, it only increased Soviet influence, especially in Egypt, in spite of Nasser's hatred of colonial influence.<sup>46</sup>

According to Ze'ev Schiff, defense editor of the Haaretz Daily, the most important arms deals in American-Israeli relations occurred when the United States sold F-4 phantom jets to the Israelis on the verge of Lyndon Johnson's retirement. "This deal enabled Israel to initiate the deep strategic bombing of Egypt during the 1970 War of Attrition." Although the United States tried to impose restrictions and arrange for American supervision and presence in

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<sup>44</sup> Yitzhak Rabin, The Rabin Memoirs (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1979), 157, 165.

<sup>45</sup> Green, Living By The Sword, 51.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 61.

Israeli military installations, Israel rejected these demands and eventually received the jets with no conditions attached.<sup>47</sup>

In the midst of the canal attacks and counterattacks, the new Israeli Prime Minister, Golda Meir, visited the United States in September of 1969.<sup>48</sup> There could be no settlement without negotiations between the sides, and the final understanding had to take the form of a binding peace agreement. Israel was willing to withdraw, but only to defensible borders and only after a peace agreement had been reached. Prime Minister Meir was very clear on one point: there could be no separate Palestinian nation. She told Nixon:

A Palestinian state between us and Jordan can only become a base from which it will be even more convenient to attack and destroy Israel.<sup>49</sup>

In the wake of this continued violence, the official American diplomatic response remained virtually unchanged. The State Department proposed the continuation of the Jarring mission in the context of United Nations Resolution 242, as well as the notion of two power and four power talks. President Charles De Gaulle of France proposed the Big Four Talks so France would have an important role in the Middle East. After meeting with De Gaulle in March of 1969, Nixon reported that he better understood the positions of his "European friends" and would "move to the four-power talks very soon."<sup>50</sup>

Foreshadowing future diplomatic roles, Secretary of State Rogers announced the public policy, while Kissinger started his secret

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<sup>47</sup> Schiff, "Friendship Under Strain," 5.

<sup>48</sup> New York Times, 30 September 1969, 1.

<sup>49</sup> Meir, My Life, 327.

<sup>50</sup> U.S., President, Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Service, 1971), Richard Nixon, 1969, 98.



dialogue with Soviet Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin. Rogers believed in a comprehensive peace plan:

I don't think it is realistic that you can have a partial agreement and put a partial agreement into effect. I think the agreement should be a complete agreement, it should be contractual and it should be in one package.<sup>51</sup>

Meanwhile, Kissinger's initial talks with Dobrynin were followed by private negotiations between Dobrynin and assistant secretary of state, Joseph Sisco. The notion of detente was already developing.<sup>52</sup> Kissinger did not want Israel to become too strong militarily and upset the balance of power in the region while the talks took place. Therefore, American aid to Israel was on hold. On the other hand, Israel's prime concern was for its security. Prime Minister Meir tried to convince Nixon and Rogers that a "compromise" solution between the Russians, Americans, French and British might satisfy the American-Soviet detente, but would not necessarily secure Israeli safety.<sup>53</sup>

On December 9, 1969, Secretary of State, William Rogers announced his new plan which came to be known as the Rogers Plan. He promised genuine peace in the Middle East in exchange for partial disengagement of both sides along the canal. He changed the focus from an agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union to an agreement between the warring parties. Rogers believed this approach was "balanced and fair."<sup>54</sup>

The call for Israeli withdrawal from territories occupied by the 1967 war would prove particularly troublesome for Israeli leaders.

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<sup>51</sup> Congress, Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, Briefing by Secretary of State William P. Rogers (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1969), 57.

<sup>52</sup> Szulc, The Illusion of Peace, 91.

<sup>53</sup> Meir, My Life, 320.

<sup>54</sup> Stebbins and Adam, eds, Documents on American Foreign Relations: 1969, 216.

On December 22, the Israeli cabinet rejected the plan. Golda Meir sought Arab recognition of Israel and a discussion of border security to take place during direct negotiations, not as a prior condition to talks. She claimed that Resolution 242:

does not say that Israel must withdraw from all territories, nor does it say that Israel must withdraw from the territories, but it does say that every state in the area has a right to live within 'secure and recognized boundaries' and it does specify the termination of all claims or states of belligerency.<sup>55</sup>

Although Rogers insisted that the United States would not "impose" a peace settlement on Israel, Mrs. Meir was not convinced. She was also concerned that the United States did not consult Israel prior to publicly stating the plan, and that the United States and Soviet Union had collaborated without Israeli input.<sup>56</sup> American officials insisted that Israeli leaders were kept fully informed.<sup>57</sup>

In February of 1970, Israel presented Washington policymakers with its "wish list" for military assistance. According to Kissinger, it was decided that Israel could maintain its military superiority without new deliveries.<sup>58</sup> Golda Meir became disturbed that Israel had exhausted all of its resources and not been able to secure necessary aircraft deliveries. With the assistance of the Deputy Foreign Minister Gideon Raphael, the Prime Minister drafted a reply that expressed regret over the decision while noting the positive commitments the United States had made toward Israel.<sup>59</sup>

In June of 1970, it was reported that the Soviets were assisting the Egyptians with air defense. As the region heated up and the risk of global confrontation rose, the Nixon administration urged Israel, Egypt and Jordan to participate in a renewed effort by Jarring to hold

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<sup>55</sup> Meir, My Life, 311.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 349-51.

<sup>57</sup> Szulc, The Illusion of Peace, 97.

<sup>58</sup> Kissinger, The White House Years, 564.

<sup>59</sup> Raphael, Destination Peace, 218.

discussions. The United States would offer to Israel three Phantoms and Skyhawks per month starting in July. The deliveries would be decreased or stopped "if negotiations...had started and showed signs of success." Unwittingly, the State Department had given the Israelis an incentive to have the negotiations fail. The deliveries would halt if the talks were successful and progress was made toward peace. Meanwhile, Soviet planes carried out surveillance flights of the Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean and the Soviet navy had free use of Egyptian ports.<sup>60</sup>

Then in early July, Kissinger announced at San Clemente in front of a group of White House reporters that a goal of American policy was to "expel" the Russians from the Middle East. Although he spoke "off the record" at this point, Rogers became outraged when he heard this. The Secretary of State was forced to dispel Kissinger's remarks at a news conference in London. He said the United States "never thought of expelling" the Russians; although he certainly was trying to diminish Soviet influence in the region.<sup>61</sup>

The Americans did establish bilateral talks with Israel and then the Arabs. National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger claimed that his talks with Anatoly Dobrynin in June had led to the development of a cease-fire agreement. Secretary of State Rogers claimed that he thought up the initiative, while Assistant Secretary of State Joseph Sisco maintained that he drew up the initiative.<sup>62</sup> Nasser commented in a television interview that he would agree to a cease-fire of a limited duration. The cease-fire agreement became effective August 7, 1970, between Israel and Egypt, and the cease-fire agreement between Israel and Jordan was reaffirmed. But as the agreement came into effect, Israeli intelligence submitted evidence to Washington that the Egyptian army along with Soviet personnel were moving surface-to-air missiles forward along the

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<sup>60</sup> Kissinger, The White House Years, 576.

<sup>61</sup> Szulc, The Illusion of Peace, 317.

<sup>62</sup> Kissinger, The White House Years, 582.

Suez Canal.<sup>63</sup> According to the memoirs of Yitzhak Rabin, then ambassador to Washington, it was Israeli officials who objected to American U2 planes from taking reconnaissance photographs of the cease-fire lines.<sup>64</sup> According to another account, the American reconnaissance planes were stalled for three days after the cease-fire while permission was arranged from President Makarios of Cyprus to land the American U2s and SR71s to monitor the truce.<sup>65</sup>

On August 17, Ambassador Rabin met with Nixon and Kissinger to discuss the violations. Rabin recalled that while he tried to impress upon Nixon the seriousness of the Egyptian violations, he recalled that Nixon brushed over the violations and stressed the broader notion of the peace process. Rabin tried to impress upon Nixon the difficulty of accepting the Rogers plan or any other plan with the Egyptians when they could not even observe a limited cease-fire.<sup>66</sup> Nixon stressed the importance of Israel not attacking first, "If our peace initiative fails, everyone should be able to recognize who is at fault, and I hope that it will not be Israel."<sup>67</sup>

Although senior officials at the White House and State Department initially found Israeli claims of cease-fire violations inconclusive, by September some had recognized Egyptian violations and made no offer to change the situation. This resulted in an Israeli refusal to resume talks.<sup>68</sup> The "American initiative came to an abrupt halt as Egypt failed to rescind her violations of the cease-fire agreement."<sup>69</sup> Remarkably, the ninety-day cease-fire was renewed on November 6, 1970 for another ninety days, but Egyptian President Sadat argued that without progress toward implementing

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<sup>63</sup> Raphael, Destination Peace, 230.

<sup>64</sup> Rabin, The Rabin Memoirs, 182.

<sup>65</sup> Szulc, The Illusion of Peace, 318.

<sup>66</sup> Rabin, Rabin Memoirs, 186.

<sup>67</sup> Nixon, Richard, The Memoirs of Richard Nixon (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1978), 481.

<sup>68</sup> Raphael, Destination Peace, 231.

<sup>69</sup> Ghanayem and Voth, The Kissinger Legacy, 70.

Resolution 242, there would be no renewals after that. He declared on November 30, 1970: "We shall not withdraw one single missile from the front and we shall not give up one single inch of our land."<sup>70</sup>

Rogers' diplomatic success in achieving a cease-fire and stand-still agreement was overshadowed by the controversy in its aftermath. Secretary of State Rogers made no attempt to make Egypt comply with the agreement even when photo reconnaissance showed Egyptian violations. Instead, additional military equipment was promised to Israel. Once again, the Israelis were given aid to appease them.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Raphael Israeli, ed., The Public Diary of President Sadat: The Road to War (Leiden, The Netherlands: E.J. Brill, 1978), 14.

<sup>71</sup> Edward N. Luttwak and Walter Laqueur, "Kissinger and the Yom Kippur War," Commentary 58 (September 1974): 38.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE JORDANIAN CRISIS

Washington policymakers became very concerned that the Middle East conflict would set off a global confrontation. To this end, Kissinger believed it was "essential to reduce the scope of Soviet adventurist policies in the Middle East."<sup>72</sup> Therefore, for Nixon and Kissinger the key to resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict could be found in Moscow as much as in the Middle East capitals. The interests of the regional countries were secondary to the interests and goals of the superpowers in avoiding a nuclear war.<sup>73</sup>

One of the main components of Nixon's foreign policy was the "Nixon Doctrine." Although it was primarily a policy for American-Vietnamese relations, Nixon also applied it to other "free nations" throughout the world, including the Middle East. President Nixon announced in a May 1970 press conference that the United States:

...should not take the responsibility in the future to send American men in to defend the neutrality of countries that are unable to defend themselves.<sup>74</sup>

The goal was to continue American involvement in regional affairs through "the defense and development of allies and friends." As Nixon described in a State of the World address, the Nixon Doctrine promoted the establishment of a framework in which the Arabs and Israelis could negotiate the tough issues as they arose.<sup>75</sup>

During the Jordanian crisis of September 1970, the United States used its military cooperation with Israel to its benefit. Even though Israel represented a local ally with its own interests, it was

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<sup>72</sup> Kissinger, The White House Years, 347.

<sup>73</sup> Ghanayem and Voth, The Kissinger Legacy, 159.

<sup>74</sup> Johnson, ed., The Nixon Presidential Press Conferences, 104.

<sup>75</sup> Stebbins and Adam, Documents on American Foreign Relations: 1970,

motivated and capable of acting as a "crisis manager" for the United States. America was already immersed in the quagmire of the Vietnam War and did not want to use coercive diplomacy or direct military intervention to achieve stability in the region.<sup>76</sup>

In September of 1970, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PLFP), hijacked several airplanes and forced them to land near Amman. The PLFP demanded the release of fedayeen prisoners held in Israel, and hoped to bring about a confrontation between Hussein and the fedayeen. The hijackers also wanted to make clear their demand that any peace settlement should include participation from the Palestinians. On September 8, Secretary of State Rogers met with ten envoys from the Arab governments hoping to gain their support; yet they did not have control over the PLFP.<sup>77</sup> The next day, President Nixon made a public announcement that the United States was selling eighteen new Phantoms to Israel. It was not certain whether the deliveries of the fighter-bombers would be considered replacements or not. The administration did not issue a justification of the sale of these planes, although top officials were "especially sensitive" to the symbolism of the sale to Arab leaders.<sup>78</sup>

On September 10, the 82d Airborne at Fort Bragg, North Carolina was placed on "semi-alert," C-130 transport planes were flown to Turkey, and the aircraft carrier Saratoga was positioned in the eastern Mediterranean, joining the Independence. Two days later, the PLFP transferred hostages to a camp near Zerba and blew up the three airliners. Although the planes were destroyed, the hostages survived. Then a compromise was reached: 450 Arab prisoners detained in Israel were exchanged for the release of the

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<sup>76</sup> Y. Bar-Siman-Tov, "Crisis Management by military Cooperation with a Small Ally: American-Israeli Cooperation in the Syrian-Jordanian Crisis, September 1970," Cooperation and Conflict 17 (1982): 151.

<sup>77</sup> Szulc, The Illusion of Peace, 323.

<sup>78</sup> New York Times, 9 September 1970, 1.

hostages. All hostages were released immediately, except for 55 Jewish passengers who were freed on September 29.<sup>79</sup>

On September 15, King Hussein placed Jordan under martial law and established a military government.<sup>80</sup> He took an offensive stance against the Palestinian refugee camps which served as headquarters for the fedayeen. The Palestinian Liberation Organization was established in 1964 and gradually expanded power in Jordan as a "state within a state." The 1.2 million Palestinian Arabs regarded themselves as superior to the 875,000 Bedouins in Jordan.<sup>81</sup>

Syria and Iraq supported the Palestinians. Syria, however, did not fear direct American involvement and started verbally to threaten the United States. Yassir Arafat, commander of the Palestinian commando forces, announced on Damascus radio "I salute you [fedayeen] as you offer your blood to foil the imperialist massacre."<sup>82</sup>

Although Nixon did not want to intervene directly, his public messages attempted to keep his opponents off guard. He hinted that he might involve American troops if Syria or Iraq became involved in the conflict, tipping the balance against his ally, King Hussein of Jordan. Meanwhile, more American naval forces were sent to the eastern Mediterranean while C-130 transport aircraft were sent to strategic points in Turkey and Europe.<sup>83</sup> There is speculation that this information "leaked" to the New York Times from the Chicago Sun Times editors and was welcomed by Nixon as a warning to the Soviets, Iraqis and Syrians.<sup>84</sup> Although Nixon thought American military action was appropriate to fight Syria, a Soviet proxy, he did

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<sup>79</sup> New York Times, 12 September 1970, 30 September 1970.

<sup>80</sup> Quandt, Decade of Decisions, 111.

<sup>81</sup> New York Times, 20 September 1970, 7.

<sup>82</sup> New York Times, 18 September 1970, 11.

<sup>83</sup> New York Times, 19 September 1970, 1.

<sup>84</sup> Szulc, The Illusion of Peace, 325.



not think the necessary domestic support could be achieved for American intervention in the midst of the Vietnam war.

Israeli intervention therefore became the preferred option. Nixon met with Golda Meir on September 18, 1970 at the White House. Mrs. Meir said that Israel's recent problems were caused by the Soviet presence in Egypt. Nixon assured her that it was not the intent of American policy to upset the military balance in the Middle East, and promised to work with her in developing a military aid program. Mrs. Meir agreed not to move precipitately into Jordan, thus allowing King Hussein to resolve the problem himself.<sup>85</sup>

Nixon did not want to resort to using an ally in this situation, but he changed his mind by September 20. By then, Syrian tanks were storming Jordan. Hussein asked the Americans to tell Israel that Jordan would welcome Israeli air support. The Israelis agreed but wanted an American guarantee of their safety. The United States was not ready to protect Israel's efforts.<sup>86</sup> The pro-Arab faction at the State Department was against the idea because of possible negative consequences to a long-term relationship with King Hussein.<sup>87</sup>

Kissinger remembered a slightly different version. Although the Israeli Ambassador to Washington, Yitzhak Rabin, said Kissinger relayed an urgent Jordanian request for Israeli support against advancing Syrians, Kissinger later wrote that he called Rabin to request his help in gathering reconnaissance information only. Then Kissinger said "the U.S. would look favorably upon an Israeli air strike. We would make good any Israeli material losses, and we would do our utmost to prevent any Soviet interference."<sup>88</sup> In any event, after much discussion, the American-Israeli cooperation

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<sup>85</sup> Nixon, The Memoirs of Richard Nixon, 484.

<sup>86</sup> Szulc, The Illusion of Peace, 329.

<sup>87</sup> Bar-Siman-Tov, "Crisis Management," 155.

<sup>88</sup> Kissinger, The White House Years, 625.

agreement was verbally agreed to on Monday, September 21.<sup>89</sup> Israel was ready to respond if need be.

Hussein, now backed if necessary by the Israelis and Americans, ordered his small air force to attack Syrian tanks around Irbid. He stood up to the Syrians and Palestinian guerrillas. By the afternoon, Syrian tanks started to withdraw, and Israeli and American intervention was not required.<sup>90</sup>

During the Jordanian crisis, the United States found that direct intervention in regional conflicts was not the best solution to protect its vital interests.<sup>91</sup> Israel, however, protected King Hussein and deterred the Syrian air force by its presence without American or Israeli intervention. Israel was able to fulfill its role as a strong regional power according to the Nixon Doctrine. The result was increased American aid to an important strategic ally, Israel.<sup>92</sup>

This cooperation served as a signal to the Syrians and the Soviets that the United States had the ability to prevent the eventuality of a Soviet threat.<sup>93</sup> For Nixon, the crisis in Jordan was successful because King Hussein remained in power, the fedayeen was crushed, American-Israeli relations were strong, and the Soviet Union was forced to back down.<sup>94</sup>

One negative result of the successful American-Israeli cooperation during the Jordanian crisis was Israel's increased bargaining power with the United States between 1970-1973. William Quandt, former senior National Security Council staffer and attendant at Washington Special Action Group meetings argued in Decade of Decision that it led the United States into a state of complacency toward the Middle East conflict, which was only shaken with the onset of the Yom Kippur war. Quandt has also suggested

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<sup>89</sup> Bar-Siman-Tov, "Crisis Management," 158.

<sup>90</sup> Quandt, Decade of Decisions, 118.

<sup>91</sup> Kissinger, The White House Years, 628.

<sup>92</sup> Quandt, Decade of Decisions, 122.

<sup>93</sup> Bar-Siman-Tov, "Crisis Management," 162.

<sup>94</sup> Quandt, Decade of Decisions, 106.

that Nixon and Kissinger overemphasized the American-Soviet dimension of the Jordanian crisis instead of focusing on internal Syrian politics as a source of the tension. Kissinger saw the situation as a microcosm of the larger East-West conflict and underestimated the domestic problems.<sup>95</sup> The strength of Israel as an effective deterrent to further aggression in the Middle East failed ultimately because Syrian internal factors that had prompted the aggression were largely ignored. The emphasis on a policy directed at the Soviet Union was unlikely to have much success if Syrian action was rooted in domestic politics.<sup>96</sup>

Undersecretary of State Elliot Richardson was one of the few voices that urged the White House to consider the needs of the Palestinians in order to avoid another crisis. He wrote a secret memorandum for Secretary of State Rogers that promoted the notion of some form of dialogue with the Palestinians. Richardson remarked, "we had, by neglect, created a situation in which there were very few moderate Palestinians left to talk to...."<sup>97</sup>

Certainly, the Americans had committed to supporting Israel with military aid even before the Jordanian crisis. On August 14, 1970, "before American intelligence had confirmed Egyptian [cease-fire] violations, Nixon authorized a \$7 million arms package for Israel."<sup>98</sup> Then more significantly, on September 1, 1970, Rogers, Kissinger, and Sisco met with Nixon and decided to sell Israel at least eighteen F-4 Phantom jets. When the Jordanian civil war erupted, America established a stronger pro-Israel position. In fact, on October 15, 1970, the administration approved \$90 million worth of arms to Israel and increased promises of financial aid and weapons. On December 28, the Israelis invited Jarring to begin negotiations again.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Ghanayem and Voth, The Kissinger Legacy, 167.

<sup>96</sup> Bar-Siman-Tov, "Crisis Management," 161.

<sup>97</sup> Szulc, The Illusion of Peace, 312.

<sup>98</sup> Quandt, Decade of Decisions, 107.

<sup>99</sup> Kissinger, The White House Years, 1277.

Meanwhile in Egypt, President Nasser died and Anwar Sadat became his successor on October 18, 1970. Although largely unknown to White House observers, Anwar Sadat would prove a more moderate leader than Nasser. In a New York Times interview, on December 28, 1970, Sadat revealed that the United Arab Republic would recognize Israel if it gave up the territory seized during the Six-Day War. President Sadat said that he would welcome a guarantee by the "Big Four" countries of all Middle East borders. He admitted that any discussion of opening the Straits of Tiran and Gulf of Aqaba to Israeli passage would hinge on settlement of the Palestinian refugee problem. Even if these issues were resolved, normal relations between the United Arab Republic and Israel would not be established. Sadat said: "Do not ask me to make diplomatic relations with them...never, never, never...leave it to the coming generations, not me...."<sup>100</sup>

In January of 1971, the Jarring mission was reestablished. This time Jarring sought "parallel and simultaneous prior commitments" from both Israel and Egypt. Resolution 242 still served as the basis for the discussions. Ambassador Jarring resumed talks with Prime Minister Golda Meir and Foreign Minister Abba Eban, as well as with representatives of Jordan, Egypt and Lebanon on January 5, 1971. On February 8, 1971, he requested Egypt and Israel establish these "commitments" before coming to the bargaining table. During the meetings, Israel presented to Ambassador Jarring a paper entitled "Essentials of Peace." Correspondingly, Egypt and Jordan, after reading Israel's report, presented their own views concerning implementation of Resolution 242. Jarring stated he found grounds for "cautious optimism."<sup>101</sup> But there were no real breakthroughs and it merely seemed as if it were a repetition of the previous mission.

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<sup>100</sup> New York Times, 28 December 1970, 1, 14.

<sup>101</sup> Stebbins and Adam, eds, Documents on American Foreign Relations: 1971, 194.

Nixon proclaimed in a foreign policy report on February 25, 1971, that the United States had taken the initiative "to stop the fighting and start the peace process." He reiterated his concern that the two superpowers would be forced to go to war in the Middle East over a local conflict, and he stressed that the United States would not "impose a peace" on the two parties, but would "support the peace efforts." Nixon believed that both Israel and their Arab neighbors could trust the United States: "One good reason why other nations take us at our word in the Middle East is because the United States has kept its word in Southeast Asia."<sup>102</sup>

Since a comprehensive peace agreement remained an elusive goal at this point, between February and August of 1971, the State Department promoted the idea of an interim agreement between Israel and Egypt. On February 4, Anwar Sadat announced that Egypt would clear the Suez Canal which had been blocked since 1967, and reopen it to international navigation if Israel partially withdrew from the Canal's east bank.<sup>103</sup> On March 3, an Israeli diplomatic source revealed in the New York Times:

If Egypt will eliminate total Israeli withdrawal from all territories as a condition to its demands for a peace treaty, Israel could also alter its 'no withdrawal' stand to a negotiating position.<sup>104</sup>

Meanwhile, the official diplomatic position of the United States seemed to pursue the same stale policy. At a news conference on March 16, 1971, Secretary of State Rogers declared:

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<sup>102</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>103</sup> Israeli, ed., Sadat Diary, 30.

<sup>104</sup> New York Times, 3 March 1971, 12.

There is what seems to be an impasse. We are convinced that an impasse can be overcome....we strongly support the continuation of Ambassador Jarring's mission.<sup>105</sup>

By May 8, 1971, the futility of the Jarring mission had become evident. At a news conference following a Middle East trip, Secretary of State Rogers remarked:

Although I think on the other hand that possibly we have emphasized that [the Jarring Mission] almost to the exclusion of anything else...that's why I am attracted to the idea of the interim settlement on the Suez Canal...<sup>106</sup>

The Jarring Mission failed to achieve peace in the region for a number of reasons. First, Jarring and the United Nations had insufficient leverage to encourage the parties to act. Second, he could not get the Arabs and Israelis to compromise on their interpretations of Resolution 242. The Israelis contended it was a framework for peace. The Arabs considered it an actual settlement. Former Foreign Minister Gideon Raphael placed the blame for Jarring's failed mission on his personal style. Although he was "cautious," "studious," and "conscientious," he lacked a certain boldness of character to bring both sides to a peace conference.<sup>107</sup>

The Rogers Plan was also unsuccessful in achieving a peace plan in the region. Seymour Hersh, an investigative reporter, has argued in his book The Price of Power that Kissinger functioned to quietly sabotage Rogers.<sup>108</sup> According to Hersh, although Kissinger was National Security Adviser, he acted as though he were Secretary of State. By July of 1971, Kissinger had warned Nixon of the danger

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<sup>105</sup> Stebbins and Adam, eds., Documents on American Foreign Relations: 1971, 202.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., 207.

<sup>107</sup> Raphael, Destination Peace, 193.

<sup>108</sup> Seymour Hersh, The Price of Power: Kissinger in the Nixon White House (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983,) 407.

of American support for the Rogers plan and the plan was then "stifled."<sup>109</sup>

For Hersh, the successful implementation of the Rogers Plan was a missed opportunity. Hersh quoted an National Security Council staffer who said that Henry Kissinger did not want "State" to do it.

If Henry would have had a shot at it, he might have attempted it....It was one genuine missed opportunity in that period. It was a step that would have prevented the '73 war from taking place.<sup>110</sup>

Kissinger made his position clear. "Any vestiges of the Rogers plan had to be snuffed out." He then ordered his National Security Council staffers to produce ten reasons why the United States could not become involved in a Suez Canal disengagement. "Henry wants it [the Rogers Plan] cut down." So "we played heavily on the Soviet angle."<sup>111</sup>

Hersh concluded that the Rogers Plan was destroyed due to bureaucratic rivalry. Certain diplomatic sources believe that the Rogers Plan died because Nixon did not give it his full support. In The Illusion of Peace, New York Times reporter, Tad Szulc, illustrated a few possible reasons the Rogers Plan did not enjoy the backing of the White House. Potentially, the public would oppose a secret agreement with the Russians that attempted to impose a solution on the Israelis without their knowledge. Another possibility was a disenchantment shared by Nixon and Kissinger with the Russians over the progress of the Strategic Arms Limitation talks and their lack of cooperation in Vietnam. All of these issues were tied to the Middle East under Nixon's idea of linkage.<sup>112</sup> The most plausible explanation was that Kissinger simply wanted to become the

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<sup>109</sup> Ibid., 404.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., 408.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid., 412.

<sup>112</sup> Szulc, The Illusion of Peace, 320.

"instrument of peace" and wanted to dissociate himself from Rogers. Certainly, after July of 1971, chances for disengagement were all but lost.



### CHAPTER 3

#### "NO WAR, NO PEACE"

On August 30, 1971, Sadat announced to his nation that he would change the name of the "United Arab Republic" to the historic name of "Arab Republic of Egypt." President Sadat was clear that the name change did not signify a return to isolationism.<sup>113</sup> He announced a new legal and constitutional framework "to defend our socialist society." Although he still referred to Nasser's legacy in his public announcements, Sadat gradually emerged as a leader in his own right.<sup>114</sup>

The political climate in the Middle East became more tense when Sadat boldly declared that 1971 was the year of decision for a war with Israel. The state of 'no war, no peace' could not continue and it was time for Israel to withdraw from all occupied territories. He announced, "We are ready to sacrifice one million of our people as victims in this battle."<sup>115</sup> Yet at the same time, he reiterated his support for the American plan to institute an interim agreement. Sadat had two prerequisites for the plan. Egyptian troops should be allowed to cross over the canal to areas formerly held by Israeli troops, and the cease-fire along the canal must be for no longer than six months.<sup>116</sup>

The status of Jerusalem was another point of contention between Israel and its Arab neighbors. Although Israel had formally annexed the Jordanian section of Jerusalem as early as June 27, 1967, Jordan claimed sovereignty over the area. Jordan complained to the United Nations about Israel's "illegal and unilateral measures and steps to change the Arab character of the city." George Bush, Ambassador to the United Nations, responded to the Security Council on September 25, 1971 with the American position on the issue:

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<sup>113</sup> Israeli, ed., Sadat Diary, 103.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, 56-59.

<sup>115</sup> New York Times, 23 July 1971, 3.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*

1. Jerusalem should be a unified city; 2. There should be open access to the unified city for persons of all faiths and nationalities; 3. Administrative arrangements for the unified city should take into account the interests of all its inhabitants and of the Christian, Jewish, Moslem communities; and 4. There should be roles for both Israel and Jordan in the civic, economic, and religious life of the city.<sup>117</sup>

On October 4, 1971, Rogers outlined the American position on the Middle East peace process once again to the United Nations General Assembly. This time he pressed for the interim Suez Canal agreement. Both sides would commit to "living in peace with each other and withdrawal from territories occupied in the 1967 conflict as set forth in Security Council Resolution 242."<sup>118</sup>

Kissinger wrote that his involvement in the Middle East was necessary due to Rogers' failed plan. According to Kissinger, the main reason he was not directly involved with Middle East policy until the end of 1971 was because of Nixon's attempt to comfort his old friend Rogers.

What finally got me involved in the execution of Middle East diplomacy was that Nixon did not believe he could risk recurrent crises in the Middle East in an election year. He therefore asked me to step in, if only to keep things quiet.<sup>119</sup>

Slowly, the responsibility for the Middle East was shifted to Kissinger. Ultimately, Nixon and Kissinger succeeded in undermining State Department initiatives and in gaining virtually complete control over policy toward the Middle East.<sup>120</sup> Kissinger created the Washington Special Action Group, a National Security Council

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<sup>117</sup> Stebbins and Adam, eds., Documents on American Foreign Relations: 1971, 214.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid., 208-9.

<sup>119</sup> Kissinger, The White House Years, 348.

<sup>120</sup> Quandt, Decade of Decisions, 128.

subcommittee composed of senior State Department and Pentagon officials as well as the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, and the Attorney General.<sup>121</sup> By the end of 1971, Kissinger had "unique access" to the President and his office cleared key cables instructing diplomats abroad. According to Kissinger, Nixon encouraged the rivalry between Rogers and himself, although Kissinger demonstrated a far superior knowledge of foreign policy since he had studied it all of his life, and Rogers' area of expertise was law.<sup>122</sup>

While Rogers and Kissinger squabbled, a continuing stalemate eluded resolution in the Middle East. United Nations Resolution 242 seemed to exemplify this standstill. The Palestinian Liberation Organization wanted "the creation of a secular state in Palestine;" however, the Israelis believed this would mean the end of their country. The phrase "secure and recognized boundaries" was an obstacle for Israel because Israel did not view the pre-1967 war borders as secure. Meanwhile, Syria did not want any deal, and Egypt would not make peace with Israel without support from the Syrians or Palestinians who sought the destruction of Israel.<sup>123</sup> The interim agreement also failed because Sadat thought the disengagement should be part of a total withdrawal.

The Arab use of oil as a political weapon slowly became an important consideration when developing American-Israeli foreign policy. Initially, this was not the case. Nixon seemed to ignore the threat of Arab retaliation. It was not until after the oil embargo of 1971 that Nixon decided to have the National Security Council study the world oil situation. His energy policy could have included the lifting of petroleum import quotas in 1970 but the conventional wisdom dictated that the Arabs could not "eat their oil." There were, however, Arab experts in the State Department, and businessmen

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<sup>121</sup> Kissinger, The White House Years, 183.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid., 218.

<sup>123</sup> Henry Kissinger, Years of Upheaval (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1982), 200.

and oil companies that warned of Arab retaliation, but this threat was not given much credence in the White House.<sup>124</sup> Then in 1972, King Faisal, as well as other influential Arab leaders, threatened to use oil as a weapon against their enemies; the United States was labeled a prime enemy.<sup>125</sup>

There was also the continuing focus on the notion of linkage. Nixon believed the United States and Soviet Union would aim for a global settlement of regional issues as diverse as Vietnam and the Middle East. As Kissinger remarked, Nixon "had not abandoned some vague notion of a trade-off with the Soviet Union between the Middle East and Vietnam."<sup>126</sup> It was a rather arrogant policy that claimed either the United States or Soviet Union should have control over the outcome of a regional crisis. Not only would the regions be controlled by either superpower, but the negotiations would link the regional issues together--a trade-off in one area would be linked with an advantage in another area.

As Kissinger assessed the Middle East policy during Nixon's first term, he said the "first term had underlined the futility of overeager peace plans that had run aground amid the passions of the parties."<sup>127</sup> His goals in 1971 and 1972 had been limited due to the election. He wanted to avoid a war and any domestic explosion in an election year, so he pursued his secret channels. Kissinger believed the negotiations on the interim agreement were stalled because "too much had been attempted." The idea had expanded from a mutual thinning of troops from both sides to Sadat's insistence on moving his forces to key Sinai passes.<sup>128</sup> As it turned out, neither side was ready for even a limited agreement.

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<sup>124</sup> Szulc, The Illusion of Peace, 212.

<sup>125</sup> James E. Akins, "The Oil Crisis: This Time The Wolf Is Here," Foreign Affairs 51 (April 1973): 468.

<sup>126</sup> Kissinger, Years of Upheaval, 559.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, 195.

<sup>128</sup> Kissinger, The White House Years, 1286.

In 1972 the situation did not look promising. There were three main issues involved in American-Israeli relations: the establishment of a peace settlement, the regional arms race and the fear of Soviet-American confrontation, and increased terrorist activity both in the Middle East and throughout the world by Palestinian guerrilla groups. Early in 1972, Nixon expressed concern about the expanding Soviet military position in Egypt. The Soviets had introduced SA-6 mobile surface-to-air missiles, the FOXBAT and other advanced MIG aircraft, and TU-16 bombers equipped with long-range air-to-surface missiles. Although details of American military shipments to Israel were not publicly announced as a matter of policy, Nixon noted that it was the policy of the United States to ensure a military balance in the region. Israel and certain Arab nations were provided arms to secure their self-defense.<sup>129</sup>

In spite of the stalemate on the issues, Joseph Sisco persuaded Israel to agree to participate in "proximity talks" or "hotel talks" in early February 1972. This process was described as "indirect talks between representatives of the two sides brought together at the same location."<sup>130</sup> But Egypt did not want to participate in any negotiations without prior Israeli commitment to a total withdrawal from the Sinai. Israel refused this demand especially since Egypt would not commit to direct negotiations. Furthermore, Israel did not want to relinquish the territory acquired after the 1967 war. Since Israel was not recognized by the Arab countries before the 1967 acquisition, it might as well remain "unrecognized" with larger, more secure borders. In fact, Syria did not even acknowledge Israel's existence.<sup>131</sup>

The increase in terrorist activity along the Israeli borders with Lebanon and Syria served to provide another obstacle in the path toward peace. Since Jordan had cracked down on fedayeen activity

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<sup>129</sup> Stebbins and Adam, eds, Documents on American Foreign Relations: 1972, 199.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid., 198.

<sup>131</sup> Kissinger, Years of Upheaval, 196-7.

in 1970-71, Palestinian guerrillas had centered their operation in southern Lebanon and near the Syrian-Israeli border. Syrian and Lebanese sniper raids against Israel had been answered by air and ground attacks by the Israeli military. In February and June of 1972, Israel's heavy-handed countermeasures received a rebuke by the United Nations Security Council.<sup>132</sup>

Palestinian terrorist groups did not confine themselves to border raids in an attempt to further the cause of Palestinian nationalism. A more alarming tactic was the terrorist attack against innocent third parties travelling throughout the world. In 1972 there were several shocking incidents: on February 22, 1972, Arab terrorists hijacked a West German airliner en route to Athens releasing those on board only after receiving a \$5,000,000 ransom; on May 8, 1972, Black September terrorists seized a Belgian airliner en route to Israel and held 100 passengers hostage until finally overpowered by Israeli security forces; on May 30, 1972, three Japanese terrorists associated with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine killed 26 people and wounded 77 at Lod International airport in Israel.<sup>133</sup>

Meanwhile, White House and State Department staffers made stale diplomatic statements while National Security Council Adviser Henry Kissinger pursued his "back-channel" discussions. Kissinger and Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko sought a confidential agreement which called for a comprehensive peace plan to be achieved in stages which would include: Israeli troop withdrawal from the occupied territories and stationing of United Nations forces at Sharm el-Sheikh; freedom of navigation in the Suez Canal and the Straits of Tiran; the state of belligerency would be replaced by a state of peace with recognition of rights of independence and sovereignty of all states.<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> Stebbins and Adam, eds., Documents on American Foreign Relations: 1972, 200.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid., 201.

<sup>134</sup> Kissinger, The White House Years, 1288.

Kissinger attempted to break the impasse by separating the issues of security and sovereignty. Egypt would regain sovereignty over the Sinai, but Israel would be permitted to keep defense posts on Egyptian soil. The issue of direct negotiations between the parties and the issue of the Palestinian refugees were still open issues. Soviet Ambassador to the United States, Anatoly Dobrinin, indicated that the separation of sovereignty from security might be a possible idea, yet he pursued this notion no further. Foreign Minister Gromyko offered to publicly announce to negotiate the Suez Canal disengagement, while secretly pursuing a comprehensive agreement. Meanwhile, a high level Egyptian official expressed its dissatisfaction with the existing diplomatic channels to a diplomat in Cairo. After Kissinger heard the report, it was decided that Egyptian national security adviser, Hafiz Ismail, would come to Washington.<sup>135</sup>

On May 18 of 1972, the United States and the Soviet Union met in Moscow for an important summit meeting. The statement on the Middle East from the United States and Soviet Union was not groundbreaking. It simply reiterated the importance of Resolution 242 and pledged their support to the Jarring mission. The two superpowers agreed to some general working principles which read in part:

The final agreement should be comprehensive, covering all parties and issues....The agreement should contain provisions for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Arab territories occupied in 1967....Recognition of the independence and sovereignty of all states in the Middle East, including Israel, is one of the basic principles on which the settlement must be based.<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>135</sup> Ibid., 1289-1293.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid., 1494.

Kissinger argued that the Soviet Union showed restraint because Moscow needed American grain.<sup>137</sup> Others maintained that Moscow's restraint was motivated by a reluctance to support an Arab military solution, and avoid a direct confrontation with the United States.<sup>138</sup> To the surprise of many Middle East observers, in early May 1972, Sadat purged many political opponents who were pro-Nasser and opposed to a cease-fire with Israel. Then on July 18, 1972, Sadat expelled Soviet military personnel from Egypt, and insisted that all Soviet military installations in the country be handed over to the Egyptians. He declared:

I wanted no Soviet soldiers to fight for me my war. Just give me weapons and leave me alone. ..I have no desire to cause a Soviet-American confrontation, and anyone who desires this must be mad...<sup>139</sup>

Then, in turn, he signed a 15 year Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with the Soviet Union. Rogers saw this move as an attempt to appease the Soviets.<sup>140</sup> Kissinger interpreted the expulsion and subsequent friendship treaty as enhancing Soviet long-term interest in Egypt. Kissinger remarked, "Not knowing Sadat, I had to conclude that he was still playing Nasser's game."<sup>141</sup> He also thought opening the canal would aid Soviet oil tankers. Furthermore, since it was an election year in the United States, forcing Israeli disengagement in the Sinai posed immense political risks with the American Jewish community.<sup>142</sup>

In an address in August of 1972, Assistant Secretary of State Joseph Sisco reiterated the importance of a "Step-by-step" approach

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<sup>137</sup> Kissinger, Years of Upheaval, 204.

<sup>138</sup> Ghanayem and Voth, The Kissinger Legacy, 163.

<sup>139</sup> Israeli, Sadat Diary, 238.

<sup>140</sup> Hersh, Price of Power, 410.

<sup>141</sup> Kissinger, The White House Years, 1285.

<sup>142</sup> Hersh, Price of Power, 407.



to peace in the Middle East. He focused on positive developments in the past two years. For example, the cease-fire agreement had held for over two years and this had resulted in reduced violence in the area. Sisco could not claim that there was an absence of violence in the area. He restated the American commitment to Resolution 242, and to establishing the important "step" of an interim Suez Canal agreement. Sisco also stressed that the "no war, no peace" situation provided an opportunity for the Soviets to gain a stronger foothold in Egypt. In spite of the obstacles, for Sisco, negotiations between the parties facilitated by the United States, was a "doable proposition."<sup>143</sup>

The continued violence alarmed President Nixon. In fact, after eleven Israeli athletes were murdered by terrorists in their living quarters at the Munich Olympic Village in September of 1972, the cycle of violence had escalated. Hopes for diplomatic resolution seemed doomed. Yet even with this increasing violence, the Nixon administration did not think an actual full-scale war would break out in spite of the fact that the Arabs seemed to be organizing their military efforts to a greater degree.<sup>144</sup>

By the end of 1972, there had been virtually no diplomatic progress toward a real peace in the region. Kissinger contended that Nixon agreed with his plan of "letting compromise solutions run their futile course." Part of the Nixon Doctrine was a goal of diminishing Soviet influence in the region. By demonstrating that the Soviets could not promote Arab objectives, it would further the American national interest.<sup>145</sup> Yet the "behind the scenes" strategy with the United States and Moscow had its critics. Tad Szulc has contended that this notion of determining policy and imposing it on the warring parties was inherently doomed.<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> Stebbins and Adam, eds, Documents on American Foreign Relations: 1972, 201.

<sup>144</sup> Kissinger, Years of Upheaval, 204.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid., 201-2.

<sup>146</sup> Szulc, The Illusion of Peace, 90.

In January of 1973, eighteen Arab foreign and defense ministers met in Cairo as the Arab Joint Defense Council. They appointed the Egyptian War minister as the Commander-in-chief of the Jordanian, Syrian and Egyptian fronts. Meanwhile, Sadat continued to make threats of war toward Israel. He had threatened before in 1971, but then there was no war. He threatened again in 1972, yet he did not attack. So Kissinger argued that no one really believed he would take action.<sup>147</sup>

Israel had to take some responsibility for the increasing tension in the region. In February of 1973, Israel shot down a Libyan plane, although there were no terrorists or spy cameras on board as suspected. Nixon expressed his concern regarding the downing to the Libyan president.<sup>148</sup>

New violence erupted on March 2, 1973 when two American diplomats were taken hostage and murdered by Black September Palestinian terrorists in Khartoum. Libyan jet fighters fired on an American reconnaissance airplane over the Mediterranean on March 21. Border raids continued on the Lebanese border.<sup>149</sup> Then in retaliation for the murder of Israeli athletes in Munich, two teams of Israeli commandos who were part of the "Spring of Youth" operations entered Beirut in April of 1973 and executed several Palestinian Liberation Organization officials and their families.<sup>150</sup>

Meanwhile, Hafiz Ismail, Sadat's security adviser, arrived in Washington on February 23, 1973 for secret talks with Kissinger. Ismail remained non-committal and Kissinger reported that there was "little reason for optimism." Then in March of 1973, Nixon agreed to new warplane deliveries to Israel. This only served to anger the Egyptians when it was reported in the press.<sup>151</sup>

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<sup>147</sup> Kissinger, Years of Upheaval, 206.

<sup>148</sup> Green, Living By The Sword, 69,79.

<sup>149</sup> Kissinger, Years of Upheaval, 222.

<sup>150</sup> Green, Living By The Sword, 81.

<sup>151</sup> Kissinger, Years of Upheaval, 210, 222.

The Arabs started the call to arms. Iraq delivered a squadron of Hunter fighter planes to Egypt, while Libya delivered Mirage aircraft. Russia also made arms deliveries. Meanwhile, the Israeli Defense Forces declared a state of alert called "Blue-White" and the United States provided Israel with high-altitude high resolution photographs, showing the position of Egyptian forces.<sup>152</sup>

In April, Joseph Greene, the head of the Interests Section in Cairo, discovered information about Kissinger's secret meeting with Hafiz Ismail from Sadat's interview in the Arabic version of Newsweek. Even though the United States had no diplomatic relations with Egypt, a small American diplomatic mission remained in Cairo housed in the Spanish embassy.<sup>153</sup> (There had been no official American presence in Egypt since relations were suspended after the 1967 war.) In the article, Sadat announced: "The time has come for a shock. Diplomacy will continue before, during and after the battle...Everything in this country is now being mobilized in earnest for the resumption of the battle which is inevitable."<sup>154</sup>

Kissinger regretted that there was no way to negotiate over the Middle East without involving interested parties. On April 9, Joseph Sisco was briefed on the secret meetings by Kissinger. Even though reports that Libyan and Saudi planes were being moved to Egypt, and that Moroccan and other troops were moving to Syria, Kissinger remarked that "we still considered this psychological warfare, however, rather than serious preparation for war."<sup>155</sup>

With his penchant for secret negotiations when possible, Kissinger met again with Hafiz Ismail in France on May 20, 1973. It was no use however, because as Kissinger learned years later, Sadat had planned on war during the summer of 1972. According to Kissinger, an April 20, Central Intelligence Agency report announced that the Egyptians had "no indications of planning for any specific

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<sup>152</sup> Green, Living By The Sword, 82.

<sup>153</sup> Kissinger, Years of Upheaval, 207.

<sup>154</sup> Raphael, Destination Peace, 280.

<sup>155</sup> Kissinger, Years of Upheaval, 225.

military operation at a specific time."<sup>156</sup> Israeli intelligence also failed to predict the Egyptian-Syrian attack even though there had been massive Soviet arms shipments to Egypt and Syria, beginning in 1973 and continuing until the Yom Kippur War. Kissinger has asserted in his memoirs that there was no conclusive evidence from the intelligence community that Egypt would attack Israel. This point has been disputed by an intelligence officer from the State Department. Ray Cline has pointed to his earlier memorandum, in May, which predicted "the resumption of hostilities by autumn a better than even bet..." This study was sent to Secretary of State Rogers and a copy went to Kissinger, with no reaction. He did concede that his September 30 Central Intelligence Agency report stated, "There are reports that Syria is preparing for an attack on Israel, but conclusive evidence is lacking. The political climate...argues against a major Syrian move against Israel at this time." He argued that he did not say that a Syrian attack was out of the question in the near future.<sup>157</sup>

The diplomatic reiteration of America's commitment to a "just and lasting peace" within the bounds of Resolution 242 continued when Ambassador John Scali announced his "new initiative" in the Security Council. His plan simply restated the position America had held since the end of the 1967 war. He did try to fend off criticism that the Americans had developed a strong bias in favor of Israel. The United States pursued its own interests "and not those of any other single state," Scali declared. He admitted that any peace plan should provide for the "legitimate aspirations of the Palestinians." Although this last statement was clearly ambiguous to appease both Arabs and Israeli, he was careful to include it to dilute the charge of partisanship.<sup>158</sup>

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<sup>156</sup> Ibid., 225.

<sup>157</sup> Ray S. Cline, "Policy Without Intelligence," Foreign Policy 17 (Winter 1974-5): 132.

<sup>158</sup> Stebbins and Adam, eds., Documents on American Foreign Relations: 1973, 320.

Still the violence continued. On July 1, 1973, an Israeli air attache, Colonel Yosef Alon was killed by unidentified gunmen in Washington. The "Voice of Palestine" in Cairo announced that it was "the first execution of an Israeli representative in the United States." On July 19, seventeen people in an Athens hotel were held hostage by a Palestinian guerrilla. Meanwhile, the nonaligned members of the Security Council--Guinea, India, Indonesia, Panama, Peru, Sudan, and Yugoslavia--drafted a resolution which condemned Israel's presence in the occupied territories, and called for the "rights and legitimate aspirations of the Palestinians."<sup>159</sup>

Tension mounted in August of 1973 when two Israeli Air Force fighters forced down a Middle East airlines plane on a flight from Beirut to Baghdad. Eighty-one passengers were taken at gunpoint and questioned. The Israelis claimed that Dr. George Habash, head of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PLFP) was supposedly on board, but he was not.<sup>160</sup> The United Nations Security Council quickly and unanimously condemned the Israeli action. Ambassador John Scali declared that national and international efforts to curb terrorism "must go forward within and not outside the law."<sup>161</sup>

The situation in the Middle East was heating up. On September 13, Israeli and Syrian jet fighters engaged in the first major battle, 150 miles north of Haifa.<sup>162</sup> Two weeks later, Israeli intelligence reported that three Soviet freighters were moving to the Mediterranean presumably headed for Alexandria.<sup>163</sup>

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<sup>159</sup> Ibid., 318.

<sup>160</sup> Green, Living By The Sword, 81.

<sup>161</sup> Stebbins and Adam, eds., Documents on American Foreign Relations: 1973, 330.

<sup>162</sup> New York Times, 14 September 1973, 1.

<sup>163</sup> Szulc, The Illusion of Peace, 727.

## CHAPTER 4

### THE YOM KIPPUR WAR AND ITS AFTERMATH

President Nixon announced on August 22, 1973, that Secretary of State Rogers was resigning and would be succeeded by Dr. Henry Kissinger. Kissinger would serve as Secretary of State as well as Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs.<sup>164</sup> Kissinger's main concern in the Middle East was the increasing tension in the region. Kissinger repeatedly stressed to Israeli leaders the importance of not striking first, in the wake of Soviet build-up. Israeli Chief of Staff David Elazar knew about the Arab plans for war in advance. At 4 a.m. on October 5, he called Mrs. Meir with "irrefutable intelligence" that the Arabs would attack on the Egyptian and Syrian fronts at 6 p.m. He had prepared Israeli defense forces for a preemptive strike, but Golda Meir spoke out against such action.

I know all the arguments in favour of a pre-emptive strike, but I am against it. We don't know now, any of us, what the future will hold, but there is always the possibility that we will need help, and if we strike first, we will get nothing from anyone.<sup>165</sup>

She did agree to ready the reserves.

On October 5, 1973, Henry Kissinger talked to his Israeli and Egyptian counterparts regarding a new attempt at negotiations to take place after the November Knesset elections.<sup>166</sup> Neither the Americans nor the Israelis anticipated war at this point. They had grown accustomed to the current "no war, no peace" existence in the Middle East. The CIA had misinterpreted the increase in Syrian military activity as a reaction to the Israeli downing of three Syrian jets.<sup>167</sup> Golda Meir agreed with her defense leaders who thought that

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<sup>164</sup> Stebbins and Adam, eds, Documents on American Foreign Relations: 1973, 317.

<sup>165</sup> Meir, My Life, 359.

<sup>166</sup> Kissinger, Years of Upheaval, 466.

<sup>167</sup> Nixon, The Memoirs of Richard Nixon, 920.

a military confrontation would not occur for another two to three years.<sup>168</sup>

The powder keg exploded on Saturday, October 6, 1973. The Egyptian 2nd and 3rd Army attacked and drove toward the Sinai passes. It came as quite a shock when Egyptian and Syrian forces attacked Israeli forces on the Suez Canal and in the Golan Heights. Jordan, Iraq and Saudi Arabia came to Syria's aid with men and materiel.<sup>169</sup>

Although Israeli air power cut down the Egyptian army, Israel was sustaining heavy losses. Although an airlift was needed by that Wednesday, it had not arrived as promised. The Israelis had sustained heavy losses at a failed tank offensive in the Sinai, although they had succeeded in pushing back the Syrians. There was also a critical shortage of ammunition. Mrs. Meir called Ambassador Dinitz in Washington pleading for the aid Nixon had promised. Kissinger blamed the Pentagon for the delay. Later it was revealed that the Defense Department had been reluctant to send supplies in American planes. The first flight of the American airlift arrived on the ninth day of the war, October 14 and continued through November 22.<sup>170</sup>

This version of events places the blame for the delay in arms shipments on the shoulders of the Pentagon. According to this view, Kissinger had decided that Israel should receive military supplies from the United States.<sup>171</sup> The Secretary of Defense, James Schlesinger, who was ostensibly more concerned with oil interests than with Israeli survival, was portrayed as the roadblock to arming Israel. According to President Nixon, Schlesinger did not want to offend the Arabs by allowing Israeli El Al transport planes to land at American military bases. So Kissinger convinced Schlesinger that they could stop in New York and have the Star of Davids on their tail

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<sup>168</sup> Raphael, Destination Peace, 282.

<sup>169</sup> New York Times, 8 October 1973, 1.

<sup>170</sup> Meir, My Life, 362.

<sup>171</sup> Luttwak and Laqueur, "Kissinger and the Yom Kippur War," 33.

markings painted over.<sup>172</sup> On October 8, Kissinger promised Ambassador Dinitz that El Al airplanes would have landing rights at American bases, and that any Israeli losses of aircraft would be replaced. Then, Kissinger backed down on the deal and said only two Phantoms would be released. When Dinitz protested, Kissinger claimed: "Defense is putting up all kinds of obstacles. After two days of war, Israel had received no American aid. Nixon reported that at this point he told Kissinger to "Tell Schlesinger to speed it up."<sup>173</sup> Meanwhile, Nixon's attention was directed toward selecting a new Vice President after Spiro T. Agnew's resignation.

On Thursday, October 11, Kissinger claimed that William Clements, the Deputy Secretary of Defense, "with close ties to the oil industry," was obstructing the aid to Israel. As Meir and Dinitz pleaded for release of aid, only a trickle flowed out of the United States. Israeli El Al aircraft were limited to aid they could fit on the passenger planes. Dinitz met with Kissinger on Friday, October 12 and complained about the lack of American support. Finally, when Dinitz threatened to go the American public and to Congress with his requests for aid, did Kissinger finally talk with Nixon about aid. Nixon ordered Schlesinger to send thirty C-130 transports to Israel, Nixon also ordered ten Phantoms delivered to Israel.<sup>174</sup>

On Saturday, October 13, on the eighth day of the war, Schlesinger, according to Kissinger, was still explaining the delay, when Nixon "exploded." Kissinger then took charge of monitoring the shipments and on Saturday afternoon, C-5 heavy transport planes shipped the first real aid to Israel.<sup>175</sup>

During this time, the crisis expanded in two important ways: the Soviet Union and the United States continued their build-up of naval strength in the Mediterranean, and more importantly, the Arab oil-producing countries cooperated to increase oil prices on October

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<sup>172</sup> Nixon, The Memoirs of Richard Nixon, 924.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid., 927.

<sup>175</sup> Kissinger, Years of Upheaval, 521.



16-17. Until the Israelis withdrew from the occupied territories and restored the "legitimate rights of the Palestinians, the Persian Gulf oil-producing countries agreed to reduce production by 10 percent immediately and by 5 percent each month thereafter. Then after Nixon requested \$2.2 billion in aid to Israel on October 19, Abu Dhabi, Libya, Saudi Arabia, Algeria and Kuwait imposed total oil embargoes against the United States and the Netherlands due to their alleged partiality to Israel.<sup>176</sup> The oil weapon now had to become a serious consideration in American-Israeli diplomatic overtures.

In an attempt to find a proposal to stop the hostilities, President Sadat met with Premier A.M. Kosygin in Cairo, October 16-19. Communist Party Leader Leonid Brezhnev and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger also conferred October 20-21 and decided that both countries should jointly present their cease-fire plan.<sup>177</sup> Nixon granted Kissinger "plenipotentiary" powers on his trip to Moscow, but legal experts have since pointed out that the president could not have given him power as a commander-in-chief without Congressional approval. Kissinger and Brezhnev constructed what would become United Nations Resolution 338 and cabled it to United Nations Ambassador John Scali.<sup>178</sup>

On October 22, the United Nations Security Council met in an emergency session and passed Resolution 338 calling for a cease-fire to go into effect within the next twelve hours. Kissinger stopped in Israel on his way home to discuss the resolution with Golda Meir and the Israeli cabinet and military chiefs. According to a New York Times account, Israel had little choice and accepted the cease-fire. Unfortunately, the Syrians did not accept it, and the Egyptians accepted the cease-fire but did not comply. Israel contended that Egyptians violated the cease-fire on Tuesday, October 23. Israeli troops responded by driving into the outskirts of Suez City and

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<sup>176</sup> Stebbins and Adam, eds., Documents on American Foreign Relations: 1973, 443.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid., 447.

<sup>178</sup> Szulc, The Illusion of Peace, 742.

encircling the city.<sup>179</sup> When the fighting did not stop, a crisis between Moscow and Washington resulted. The United Nations passed a second cease-fire resolution on Tuesday, October 23. Sadat asked the United States and Soviet Union to join forces to monitor the cease-fire. On October 24, the Soviet Union prepared airborne troops and threatened intervention and the United States reacted by raising the state of alert to a nuclear stage one.<sup>180</sup> It only ended by joint action of the two superpowers, just as had the other Arab-Israeli wars.

The events of the October 24, 1973 nuclear alert merit closer examination. At the time, the United Nations cease-fire was not holding and Israeli troops had cut off the Egyptian Third Army at the Suez Canal.<sup>181</sup> Kissinger received word from Brezhnev through Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin urging Soviet-American cooperation in enforcing the cease-fire. As Brezhnev put it, "I will say it straight, that if you find it impossible to act with us in this matter, we should be faced with the necessity urgently to consider the question of taking appropriate steps unilaterally."<sup>182</sup>

Kissinger immediately responded by phoning Nixon and recommending a military alert as a deterrent to Moscow. Kissinger recalled that Nixon was preoccupied with the Watergate tape problem and the ramifications of his firing of special prosecutor Archibald Cox so he gave Kissinger the authority to handle the matter. Nixon wrote in his memoirs that after Alexander Haig, Nixon's chief of staff, told him of Brezhnev's note, he ordered Haig and Kissinger to have a meeting at the White House to formulate a "firm reaction" to the Soviet threat which might include the "shock of a military alert."<sup>183</sup> A short meeting was held in the White House Situation Room with Kissinger, Schlesinger, Director Colby of the CIA,

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<sup>179</sup> New York Times, 28 October 1973, 1, 7.

<sup>180</sup> New York Times, 25 October 1973, 1.

<sup>181</sup> New York Times, 28 October 1973, 7.

<sup>182</sup> New York Times, 10 April 1974, 1.

<sup>183</sup> Nixon, The Memoirs of Richard Nixon, 938.

National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft, and Haig. The Secretary of Defense agreed with Kissinger's proposal to issue a worldwide nuclear alert and by midnight, October 24, Defense Condition #3 went into effect. (There are five possible DEFCONs, DEFCON 1 is war.) The NATO allies suspected this alert was an attempt by Nixon and Kissinger to divert attention away from the domestic troubles brought on by Watergate.<sup>184</sup>

Although Kissinger maintained that all of the members of the National Security Council had been unanimous in the recommendation for a nuclear military alert, only he and Schlesinger met initially--William Colby joined them later. Remarkably, Nixon claimed two days later that he had ordered the alert. He called the crisis, "the most difficult crisis we have had since the Cuban confrontation of 1962." Yet it was after the alert was ordered that Haig went upstairs to tell Nixon what action had been taken.<sup>185</sup>

Ray S. Cline, an intelligence officer in the State Department, argued in an article in Foreign Policy, that Kissinger's one-on-one discussions with Nixon prevented the president from hearing full information and the varying viewpoints of knowledgeable officials from the State Department and the National Security Council. All information, at least at this meeting, was filtered through Kissinger who maintained that exchanging confidential information on policy matters with "bureaucrats" from other departments might lead to a breach in national security. Cline insisted however that the intelligence office of the State Department should have been consulted to determine if the Soviets intended to send in troops to the Middle East.<sup>186</sup>

The Soviet Union called the White House explanation of the nuclear alert "absurd." A statement released by the official press agency, TASS, called the worldwide nuclear alert "an attempt to

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<sup>184</sup> Cline, "Policy Without Intelligence," 130-2.

<sup>185</sup> Szulc, The Illusion of Peace, 746.

<sup>186</sup> Cline, "Policy Without Intelligence," 130-2.

intimidate the Soviet Union." It also stated that the action did not promote "international detente."<sup>187</sup>

Moshe Dayan, Defense Minister in the government of Golda Meir, also dismissed the notion that the Soviets might have intervened to protect the encircled Third Army. Dayan contended that they were concerned about Cairo and Aswan, not the Third Army. In fact, Dayan later revealed that the United States gave the Israelis an ultimatum: either deliver food and water to the Egyptian Third Army or the United States would fly in supplies.<sup>188</sup>

A contemporary account reported that the United States was "applying some pressure" on the Israelis to relieve the plight of the Third Corps. New fighting might have erupted as the Egyptian situation worsened. Instead of destroying the Third Army or starving them, Israel was urged to feed and water the Egyptian troops even though Sadat had not laid down his arms. The encircled army consisted of approximately 30,000 men and 200 tanks.<sup>189</sup> Mrs. Meir did not understand why the Egyptians were portrayed as poor victims instead of angry aggressors in the world community.<sup>190</sup> Kissinger wanted to avoid an outcome that would humiliate Egypt. Therefore, securing concessions from Israel to not squash the Third Army became an important part of this strategy. Kissinger did not want to intensify Arab hostility through a total Egyptian defeat by Israel.

Discussions between Egypt and Israel began at Kilometer 101 on the Cairo-Suez road at the end of October. On November 11, 1973, Israel's General Aharon Yariv and Egypt's General Abdel Gamasy signed the cease-fire agreement. This was the first face-to-face discussion on the subject of arms negotiations. This was the direct,

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<sup>187</sup> New York Times, 28 October 1973, 1.

<sup>188</sup> New York Times, 26 January 1975.

<sup>189</sup> New York Times, 28 October 1973, 17.

<sup>190</sup> Meir, My Life, 371.

personal contact that Israel had been seeking.<sup>191</sup> They negotiated relief for the Egyptian Third Army.

In November, Kissinger started his journeys to the Middle East. Although the oil embargo was still in place, Kissinger met with Sadat and finally re-established diplomatic relations with Egypt after six years. He also met with Syrian President Hafez Assad, King Faisal of Saudi Arabia, and went to Israel several times.<sup>192</sup>

The second phase of talks took place at the December 21 Geneva conference chaired by the United States and the Soviet Union. Foreign ministers from Egypt, Israel, Jordan, the United States and the Soviet Union attended. Kissinger had two goals in mind when developing his peace strategy. He wanted a negotiated settlement with an Israel that was strong enough to be the American proxy in the Middle East against the Soviet Union. In addition, with the pressure from the Watergate scandal, Nixon urged Kissinger to make a peace settlement to distract the nation from domestic concerns.<sup>193</sup> Although Egypt and Israel did meet in the same room, the atmosphere was chilly, according to Meir, and nothing had really changed.<sup>194</sup> Kissinger remarked that each of the contending parties were experimenting with the peace process but could not forget the hard-liners back home.<sup>195</sup> Although there were no tangible results at the Geneva Conference, it opened the door to peace. Egypt and Jordan sent high-level officials to meet at the same table as Israel.<sup>196</sup>

Kissinger's Middle East strategy was to save detente which was all but shattered in the 1970 Jordanian civil war and during the October 1973 war. For Kissinger, the October War did not indicate a failure of detente but only the indications of its limits. Historians call

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<sup>191</sup> Ibid., 377.

<sup>192</sup> Nixon, The Memoirs of Richard Nixon, 949.

<sup>193</sup> Milton Viorst, "The Kissinger Covenant and Other Reasons Israel is in Trouble," Washington Monthly 19 (June 1987): 27.

<sup>194</sup> Meir, My Life, 382.

<sup>195</sup> Kissinger, Years of Upheaval, 794.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid., 797.

the October War a victory for United States diplomacy as well as for the Israeli military.<sup>197</sup> "The U.S. could not allow Soviet clients armed by the U.S.S.R to defeat a U.S. client armed by the U.S."

Consequently, the level of assistance to Israel was raised to seven times what it had been the previous year.<sup>198</sup>

In the aftermath, Nixon could claim that the United States had placed the Middle East on the road to peace--although the costs were high and the results are debatable. Some Middle East pundits are skeptical of Kissinger's diplomatic successes after the Yom Kippur War. Tad Szulc proclaimed: "The principal conclusion to draw from the Arab-Israeli war fought between October 6 and October 25, 1973 is that it should not have happened in the first place."<sup>199</sup> Kissinger did achieve his goals by successfully manipulating the outcome of the war to serve the long-term interests of the United States. The threat of an oil embargo disappeared, a new relationship between the United States and the Arab world was established with the elimination of Soviet influence in the Middle East. However, these achievements occurred at the expense of Arab and Israeli lives. Furthermore, the relationship with the mostly pro-Arab allies of Western Europe was strained, and the oil embargo remained a reminder of American vulnerability. In 1974, energy became Nixon's top priority.<sup>200</sup>

Mrs. Meir reluctantly conceded in her autobiography that "the fate of small countries always rests with the superpowers, and they always have their own interest to guard." Ultimately, Mrs. Meir felt Sadat was in a stronger position diplomatically than she. The "bait" for American predominance in the Middle East was the removal of

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<sup>197</sup> Ghanayem and Voth, The Kissinger Legacy, 163.

<sup>198</sup> A.F.K. Organski, The \$36 Billion Bargain: Strategy and Politics in U.S. Assistance to Israel (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 35.

<sup>199</sup> Szulc, The Illusion of Peace, 9.

<sup>200</sup> Stebbins and Adam, Documents on American Foreign Relations: 1974, 35.

the oil embargo.<sup>201</sup> It is also interesting to note that in the Middle East all wars had been stopped by cease-fire agreements between the United States and the Soviet Union and imposed on the warring parties by joint action inside and outside the United Nations. The October War was no different. When Egypt and Syria attacked Israel, and Israel struck back, it became clear that this would not be a short war as in the past. So the Soviet Government invited Kissinger to Moscow for deliberations.<sup>202</sup>

The October War represented a turning point in American-Israeli relations. Afterwards, American policy toward Israel emphasized its strategic importance. The reasons for American aid to Israel changed from "moral and emotional reasons" and guilt from the "tragedy of the Holocaust" to "strategic reasons." As aid mounted, "in our self interest" became the American justification for aid to Israel.<sup>203</sup>

Kissinger had criticized the diplomatic efforts of the State Department during the Rogers years. He thought the "all-or-nothing" principle of the Rogers plan would inevitably lead to failure. So Kissinger pursued a policy of limited diplomatic victories achieved step-by-step. Kissinger's step-by-step diplomacy changed the nature of American foreign policy toward Israel and the Middle East in the years since the 1973 Yom Kippur War. It was effective in ending the "stalemate toward peace" that had plagued the region.

The October War enabled Kissinger to become the "savior" of both Israel and Egypt. At the beginning of the war, Kissinger was the one who deftly managed the resupply effort when Israel needed help. At the end of the war, it was Kissinger's efforts once again that convinced the Israelis to not starve out the Egyptian Third Army and humiliate Sadat at home. In 1974, Kissinger guided Egypt and Israel, and then Israel and Syria toward the disengagement of troops in the

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<sup>201</sup> Meir, My Life, 369.

<sup>202</sup> Raphael, Destination Peace, 567.

<sup>203</sup> Wolf Blitzer, Between Washington and Jerusalem: A Reporter's Notebook (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 73.

Middle East. He established new relationships with the Arabs, and the oil embargo was lifted.

Through shuttle diplomacy, Kissinger arranged the disengagement and separation of Egyptian and Israeli forces following the October War. The Egyptian forces had crossed the Suez Canal from west to east, and Israeli forces had crossed from east to west, creating a very tense situation. The actual formula divided the canal area into five zones: an Egyptian zone, a United Nations buffer zone, an Israeli zone in the Sinai, and two zones with no SAM batteries allowed. Kissinger arranged the general agreement, reflecting the ideas of Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Dayan, and the unpublished agreements between the countries.<sup>204</sup>

By May of 1974, Kissinger was also pursuing shuttle negotiations between Israel and Syria, while a war of attrition continued on the ground. It seemed deadlocked. Finally, after Nixon pressured Golda Meir to be flexible, Nixon personally announced the Syrian-Israeli agreement leading to the disengagement of forces on May 31, 1974.<sup>205</sup> To be sure, it was an important step in the peace process but the same issues remained unresolved: the Palestinian issues, the status of Jerusalem, and the occupied territories.

Nixon made a precedent-breaking trip to Israel and its Arab neighbors in June of 1974. He left Washington in the midst of the Watergate crisis. Nixon met with President Sadat, King Faisal of Saudi Arabia, President Hafez al-Assad of Syria, King Hussein, and Yitzhak Rabin, now Prime Minister of Israel. Nixon was at his best as world statesman, and was warmly received in the Middle East.<sup>206</sup>

In August of 1974, President Nixon resigned. Kissinger remained as Secretary of State and pursued his shuttle diplomacy. The viability of the step-by-step approach to diplomacy came into

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<sup>204</sup> Stebbins and Adam, eds., Documents on American Foreign Relations: 1974, 16.

<sup>205</sup> U.S. President, Public Papers of the Presidents, 463.

<sup>206</sup> Stebbins and Adam, eds., Documents on American Foreign Relations: 1974, 166.



question after October of 1974 because of the results of the Arab summit meeting in Rabat, Morocco. They designated the Palestinian Liberation Organization as the "sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people in all liberated Palestinian territory." The Palestinian Liberation Organization refused to recognize Israel's right to exist.<sup>207</sup> Yitzhak Rabin vehemently rejected any negotiation with the Palestinian Liberation Organization--a terrorist organization "whose avowed policy is to strive for Israel's destruction and whose method is terrorist violence." The main question for Rabin, in November of 1974, was whether Sadat could make a separate agreement with Israel, thereby isolating Egypt from its Arab neighbors.<sup>208</sup>

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<sup>207</sup> Ibid., 408-9.

<sup>208</sup> Rabin, Rabin Memoirs, 250.

## CONCLUSION

The nature of American-Israeli relations changed significantly from 1969-1974. Israel became an American proxy against the Soviet threat in the Middle East which required a huge influx of aid without any corresponding accountability. The American commitment to Israeli security would prove staggering in the years to follow.

Although American policy since 1967 holds that "no American aid will be used by Israel to fund projects in the occupied territories,"<sup>209</sup> this ban has never been enforced. Since the aid has fallen under the category of "security support assistance," and consists of grants and loans, the projects in Israel are not specified and no one has ever been assigned to monitor these funds from the State Department or the Agency for International Development. If any of this money were transferred to the category of "development assistance," it would require that the Agency for International Development monitor its use in Israel.<sup>210</sup>

Since internal Jordanian/Palestinian or Syrian politics were less important than the larger global implications of a Middle East crisis, it is unlikely that Washington leaders were focused on Middle East domestic politics. During the Nixon/Kissinger years, regional concerns were viewed through the lens of superpower politics. The Middle East, and Vietnam for that matter, were simply pawns on the East-West chess board.

Kissinger's real victory was calming the violence and lessening Soviet influence in the region. The fundamental problems of the Palestinians, control of the occupied territories, and the status of Jerusalem, still plague the Middle East today. Certainly, Kissinger's

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<sup>209</sup> Stebbins and Adam, eds., Documents on American Foreign Relations: 1967, 154.

<sup>210</sup> Ian S. Lustick, "Kissinger and the Yom Kippur War," Commentary 58 (September 1974): 33-4.

"peace plan" was limited at best. He criticized Rogers and Jarring for their "overager" peace plans, yet was not able to close the wide chasm between Israel and its Arab neighbors.

The legacy of "Kissinger's covenant" in 1974 is the Israeli dependence on American aid. The open-ended American commitment to Israeli security seemed ultimately to hinder a plan for true peace. Israeli leaders guessed that whatever actions it took, the United States would still give aid in large doses. Over the years, many Israelis have become over-confident that there will always be great economic and military aid. Even if Israel shuns America's interests, there will be no reaction from Washington. In fact, some radical groups believe that the United States will never desert Israel. There was the notion that Israel was important in the anti-Communist struggle.<sup>211</sup> The aftereffects of this increased aid to Israel have developed into a "dependence without responsibility."<sup>212</sup>

Certainly, Kissinger was able to effectively manipulate Israel to serve his agenda. Nixon and Kissinger used Israel to serve American vital interests in the September 1970 Jordanian crisis, and Israel was rewarded by increased aid. Then, Israel gave in to American pressure to free the encircled Egyptian Third Army near the Suez Canal during the final days of the 1973 war, and more aid followed.

Israel proved itself a powerful pro-American ally with democratic values. The country's fate does not rest with a single ruler or family. Strategically, it has continued to be the strongest military power in the Middle East which Washington can rely on in case of an American-Soviet confrontation in the Middle East or the Mediterranean. There was a critical political consensus in Washington to help any country fighting Soviet moves to expand.<sup>213</sup>

The United States has also reaped important strategic benefits from its military aid to Israel. Military leaders have learned new

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<sup>211</sup> Schiff, "Friendship Under Strain," 7-8.

<sup>212</sup> Ball, "The Coming Crisis," 231.

<sup>213</sup> Organski, The \$36 Billion Bargain, 211.

intelligence techniques; benefitted from Israel's battlefield experience; learned from Israel's use of a relatively tight defense budget and necessary innovation and resourcefulness(compared to the United States); demonstrated the weaknesses of the Soviet military; promoted the strength of American weapons technology abroad.<sup>214</sup>

Israel has provided crucial information about the latest Soviet weaponry to the United States. In the 1969-70 war of attrition with Egypt, the Israelis captured an entire Soviet radar station from the Egyptians. During the Yom Kippur war, six Soviet T-62s were sent to the United States for research.<sup>215</sup>

The Israelis have identified problems and influenced solutions. According to Steven Spiegel, political science professor at the University of California, military aid to Israel has:

led to the increased use of thermal sights for nightfighting, decreased use of searchlights, greater use of tanks and armored personnel carriers in tandem, improvements in command, control, and communications facilitating the coordination of air, land, and sea operations down to the unit level, use of electronic warfare in reconnaissance units, and enhanced air-to-air missiles and electronic countermeasures.<sup>216</sup>

During the Yom Kippur War, antitank systems, air-to-air combat and electronic jammers proved essential to an Israeli military victory.<sup>217</sup> These military weapons successes showed that the United States was pursuing the right course in military weapons development.

Moreover, Israel's research and development procedures are quicker and cheaper than in the United States. There are greater cost constraints and less regulation. Quick reaction time is essential

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<sup>214</sup> Steven Spiegel, "U.S. Relations in Israel: The Military Benefits," *Orbis* 30 (Fall 1986): 475.

<sup>215</sup> *Ibid.*, 479.

<sup>216</sup> *Ibid.*, 480.

<sup>217</sup> *Ibid.*, 481.

to the Israelis because of the possibility of imminent danger. American armed forces have benefitted from Israeli developments whose licenses are later sold to companies in the United States. Moreover, Israeli modifications of existing American weaponry are sometimes adopted by the United States armed forces. Combat experience has also led to many solutions to problems in equipment.<sup>218</sup>

While Israel demonstrates the success of American technology with each military victory, it also showcases the weaknesses of Soviet weapons and embarrasses the Arab countries using Soviet arms. The Soviets send their first-line equipment to the Arabs and Arabian leaders are quick to blame the Soviets if they fail militarily.<sup>219</sup> On the other hand, the Soviets can benefit from the combat experience of their weapons also.

Certainly, the United States reaped important benefits from its relationship with Israel. In return, the United States provided a level of aid to Israel to ensure its security. During the Nixon/Kissinger years a limited peace was achieved in the region, but not a comprehensive peace plan. Two very important issues remained unresolved: Israeli occupation of the West Bank, Golan Heights and Gaza strip, and the future of the Palestinians in Israel.

Contemporary scholars differed in their opinions on what Israel should do to achieve a true peace, and also what the role of the United States should be in securing a comprehensive peace plan after the Yom Kippur War. Michael Curtis, Professor of Political Science at Rutgers University, promoted the same policy as the Washington administration. Since an overall settlement seemed highly unlikely, he advocated an interim agreement which would promote stability in the region, and eventually a negotiated settlement in accordance with Resolution 242. Israel would continue to be viewed as an ally in containing the spread of Soviet influence, and aid would continue

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<sup>218</sup> Ibid., 484.

<sup>219</sup> Ibid., 494.

in sufficient quantity to serve as a deterrent to Arab advancements. He also believed the United States should befriend moderate Arabs, and keep the American commitment to Israel intact. Essentially, this view was the same as the Nixon/Kissinger policy toward Israel. Its success had been limited.<sup>220</sup>

Another expert thought the Nixon/Kissinger approach was ineffective. Gerald Freund, contributing editor to Worldview, thought Israel's security should not be based on its military superiority in the region. In addition, all negotiations between Israel and its Arab neighbors should take into consideration Arab domestic pressures. He wrote: "Embittered generations of Palestinian refugees hovering resentfully on the borders in desert ghettos are antithetical to peace in the area." He maintained that some Arab refugees should be resettled in jobs in Israel, and Jerusalem should be "internationalized" by Israel. Finally, Israeli-occupied territories would not be essential to the country's security if Israel were granted recognition by its Arab neighbors.<sup>221</sup>

The United States must take a firm stand with Israel to assist in the resolution of issue of the Palestinians in the occupied-territories, according to John Marks, Professor of Near Eastern Studies, Princeton University. Leaders in Washington must pressure Israel to stop the development of the West Bank, and stop the arms race in the Middle East. Israel must not be a "test point in the struggle between the Great Powers."<sup>222</sup>

On the other hand, Irving Horowitz, Professor of Political Science at Rutgers University, claimed that high militarization was essential to Israel's survival. He argued that American policy toward Israel at the end of 1973 was expected to stay in limbo. Horowitz promoted the notion of the three "M's:" high militarization, high

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<sup>220</sup> "Israel, The Years Ahead," Worldview 1973 16(5): 15.

<sup>221</sup> Ibid., 17.

<sup>222</sup> Ibid., 20.

modernization, and high mobilization for Israel to prevail and serve as the national homeland for millions of displaced Jews.<sup>223</sup>

With the benefit of hindsight, it is clear that the American-supported militarization of Israel had hindered the peace process. Although the promise of military aid was used during the Nixon-Kissinger years as a leverage tool to push Israel to the negotiating table, by the end of 1973, Israel had security without peace. A constant source of instability remains as the Palestinian uprisings in the occupied-territories inevitably are followed by Israeli retaliation. For Israel to squander its resources on maintaining an armed state dependent on America for its economic needs has not been in the country's best interest. In one way or another, all of the Arab-Israeli wars have erupted due to the unresolved Palestinian question. Since the resolution to the Palestinian issue will not come easily, leaders in Washington must promote notions of shared authority, compromise, and shared sovereignty as future policy for American-Israeli relations.

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<sup>223</sup> Ibid., 19.

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